

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~SECRET~~

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Officer designations should be used in the "TO" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "TO" column. Each officer should initial (check mark insufficient) before further routing. This Routing and Record Sheet should be returned to Registry.

8449

FROM:

RELEASE AS SANITIZED

Metzl

TELEPHONE

NO.

688

DATE

19 August 1954

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	TELEPHONE	COMMENTS
		REC'D	FWD'D			
1. C/STC				[]		HAND CARRY - Barber
2.				[]		
3. C/FI			19 Aug	[]		
4.				[]		
5. DD/P			16 Sept	[]		
6. DD/P file						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						

22.4

~~SECRET~~~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

DD/P 1-1921

19 August 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: DD/P

SUBJECT: Comment on "Lessons of Guatemala"
by Daniel James

1. Stripped of dramatizations, cliches and polemical tirades, the article by James is less cogent and convincing than it appears at first reading.

2. It is quite true that Communism in Latin America thrives on poverty, economic maladjustment, anti-Americanism and desire for national independence. It is also true that Communist tactics in Latin America are particularly geared to the exploitation of these factors. The 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (October 1952) ushered in the era of an intensified united front tactic for the entire international Communist movement. This tactic, which aims at the complete isolation of the United States, calls initially for Communist "penetration" of power groups and strata (even if bourgeois) opposed to the United States. The revised draft program of CP Brazil (1954) testifies to the intensification and readjustment of the united front tactic in Latin America.

3. To call this intensification "Maoism", as James does, is more or less a play on words. As early as 1935, when the Comintern and Prestes attempted a revolution in Brazil, it was carried out on behalf of "national liberation." The tactics to be used in "colonial and semi-colonial areas" have their roots in Leninist-Stalinist doctrine. I do not think that "Maoism has given Communism a new face in Latin America." The success and doctrine of Mao, however, are being closely studied by the Communist Parties in Latin America. We have seen evidence that his writings are used as textbooks in Party schools. The Asian Peace Conference included representatives from Latin America. Yet, the intensified WFTU training program for Latin American labor-Communists is being carried out in Hungary and not

8449
JOB NO. BOX NO. FILE NO. DOC. NO. 23 NO CHANGE
IN CLASS/ DECLASS/ CLASS CHANGED TO: TS S RET. JUST. 22
NEXT REV DATE 8 OCT 54 REVIEWED BY TYPE DOC. 02
NO. PGS 1 CREATION DATE 15 OCT 45 ORG CLASS 5
REV CLASS C REV COORD. AUTH. HR 70.2

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

in China. The other international fronts, the main transmission belts of international Communism, are also being run by the Soviets.

4. It would be more exact to say that Communism in Latin America, always following tactics applying to "colonial and semi-colonial areas," is naturally absorbing and utilizing some of the experience of the Chinese CP. The implied exploitation of nationalism definitely strengthens the tactics of the CP movement in Latin America: e. g., a significant rise of CP strength in Brazil has already been evidenced.

5. I believe that James has something when he worries about the capabilities of Communism in Latin America to subvert and pervert national aspirations. This is exactly what happened in Guatemala. However, in ten years the Communists succeeded only in subverting the governmental power group and did not establish an adequate and effective mass base to take up arms in its defense: hence the collapse. This, to me, is the lesson of Guatemala, and one that is somewhat encouraging. True, the pro-Guatemalan demonstrations in Latin America during and immediately after the crisis revealed a surprising and embarrassing influence of the Communists on public opinion. Yet, as the subsequent slackening of these efforts indicates, there also appears to be lacking a mass basis to sustain the drive. In other words, I believe that throughout Latin America, even in the areas of greatest Communist strength, the movement has not yet solidified its bases, and that doomsday is not yet around the corner as James implies.

6. I am inclined to question James' theory that "in death the Guatemalan party may prove to be a bigger asset to the Kremlin than in life." Firstly, I think that failure (and from a CP point of view Guatemala was a failure) does not lend itself easily to incendiary purposes. Secondly, I think that the Arbenz regime discredited itself considerably during the crisis by resorting to terror methods the propagandistic utilization of which should have an effect on LA public opinion. Thirdly, I think that human memories are short, and that the issue of "North American interventionism" will fade if the new regime can stay in power and muster popular support.

7. Although I am less pessimistic than James, I agree that the Communist movement e. g., in Latin America remains a threat (Chile, Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay) and that U.S. positive aid to alleviate

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~SECRET~~

economic and social ills, is one means of combatting Communism in Latin America since it would further deny the Communists the mass base which they are attempting to establish and broaden. U.S. recognition of, and respect for, national aspirations is certainly another. However, I cannot agree with James that Communism is a political and not a security problem. If the U.S. were to create a climate of total political and economic democracy in Latin America, the Communists would certainly benefit from it and slide easily into power positions: this is the dilemma as I see it. We have seen the dilemma in action in this country in the Thirties and in Europe right after World War II.

8. Communism is a security problem as well as a political one. The problem, to me, is to combine "positive aid" with the strengthening of anti-Communist public opinion and of indigenous security services throughout LA: taking the wind out of the Communist's sails and at the same time making sure that their boat gets sunk completely.

- [] -

C/STC/ICB

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~